

# **U.S. EPA, Region 6 U.S./Mexico Border Air Quality Program: FY 2006/2007 Request for Proposals (RFP)**

**RFP NO: EPA-R6-GRANTS-111506-01**

**CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE (CFDA) NO:  
66.034**

**DATES:** The grant period for all applicants applying under this solicitation is anticipated to begin during the Federal fiscal year (FY) 2007, with a period of performance not to exceed 18 months. The closing date for applicants to submit proposals under this announcement is **November 15, 2006**. Proposals submitted via U.S. mail, or by commercial delivery services must be post-marked by the closing date. Proposals submitted via Grants.gov must be received by the closing date and time (5 pm Central) (refer to Section IV(E), *Submission Date and Time*, for further information).

To allow for efficient management of the competitive process, EPA Region 6 requests submittal of an informal notice of “Intent to Apply” by October 27, 2006. Submission of Intent to apply is optional; it is a process management tool that will allow EPA Region 6 to better anticipate the total staff time required for efficient review, evaluation, and selection of submitted proposals.

**SUMMARY:** EPA Region 6 is accepting proposals from eligible applicants to conduct research, investigations, experiments, demonstrations, surveys, and studies relating to the causes, effects (including health and welfare effects), extent, prevention, and control of air pollution in the U.S./Mexico Border area, and to meeting the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). The U.S./Mexico Border area is defined as the area within 100 kilometers of the U.S./Mexico Border. This program supports air pollution control agencies in conducting projects to improve air quality and reduce pollution in the area along the U.S./Mexico Border.

**FUNDING/AWARDS:** The total estimated amount of funding available under this announcement is approximately \$1,500,000 in State and Tribal Grant (STAG) funds. There is no cost share or matching requirement for these funds.

EPA expects to make approximately ten to thirty awards under this announcement, in the form of cooperative agreements ranging

from about \$25,000 to \$600,000 each.

Each applicant may submit only one proposal for this competition.

## **Section I - Funding Opportunity Description.**

- A. Background:** For more than twenty years, the U.S. and Mexico have collaborated through the La Paz Environmental Agreement to help safeguard the health of border residents and improve border air quality. The two governments, in partnership with border tribal, state and local governments, have worked to increase the knowledge about pollution sources and their impacts on both sides of the border, establish monitoring networks to assess air pollution levels in several key areas, conduct emissions inventories, and build local capacity through training. Through these efforts, the two countries have established a cooperative relationship to enhance binational air quality assessment, planning, and management programs. The overall program goals are to: determine ambient concentrations from pollution emissions, assess contributing emission sources and their relative impacts, and develop and test or demonstrate non-traditional, cost-effective control strategies for meeting the NAAQS.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Office of Air and Radiation sets aside funds on an annual basis for Region 6 to support activities near the border of the U.S. and Mexico. Recognizing that special projects could spur the development of non-traditional progressive air quality NAAQS compliance management approaches, EPA is announcing the availability of Federal fiscal year funding in 2006 and 2007 to support non-traditional projects which address air quality NAAQS compliance issues along the U.S./Mexico border.

The projects selected in this competition will be funded from State and Tribal Grant (STAG) funds, for which only states, federally recognized Tribes, and CAA § 105-eligible air pollution control agencies<sup>1</sup> may apply, and awarded under the Clean Air Act

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<sup>1</sup> The Clean Air Act (as amended) of 1990, Section 302(b) states that:

(b) The term "air pollution control agency" means any of the following:

(1) A single State agency designated by the Governor of that State as the official State air pollution control agency for purposes of this act.

(2) An agency established by two or more States and having substantial powers or duties pertaining to the prevention and control of air pollution.

(3) A city, county, or other local government health authority, or, in the case of any city, county, or other local government in which there is an agency other than the health authority charged with responsibility for enforcing ordinances or laws relating to the prevention and control of air pollution, such other agency[0].

(4) An agency of two or more municipalities located in the same State or in different States and having substantial powers or duties pertaining to the prevention and control of air pollution.

(5) An agency of an Indian tribe.

The Clean Air Act (as amended) of 1990, Section 105(a) states that:

(a)(1)(A) The Administrator may make grants to air pollution control agencies, within the meaning of paragraph (1), (2), (3), (4), or (5) of section 302, in an amount up to three-fifths of the cost of

(CAA) Section 103 authority, which specifically limits the use of funds to conducting investigations, experiments, demonstrations<sup>2</sup>, surveys, studies and training in support of the U.S./Mexico Border initiative. Awards under this announcement may involve geospatial information.

**B. Scope of Work:** EPA Region 6 is soliciting grant proposals for projects designed to address air quality NAAQS compliance issues along the U.S./Mexico Border in Region 6. Applicants may submit one proposal addressing one or more of the following types of projects:

1. Border Environmental Indicator Studies:  
Proposed projects should support ambient air assessment activities to validate border environmental indicators to assess status of NAAQS compliance, including activities such as ambient air monitoring and the development of emissions inventories, among others, along the U.S./Mexico Border. Proposed projects may be performed in either the U.S. or Mexico, or both. These activities could include the assessment of air toxics concentrations, the development of mobile source air pollution reduction strategies, infrastructure impacts (such as road paving), and coordination with SEMARNAT, Mexico state and local governments, and NGOs to identify additional ambient air monitoring needs.
2. Emission Reduction/Energy Efficiency/Renewable Energy Projects:  
Proposed projects should support the coordination of research, investigations, experiments, demonstrations (see footnote 2), surveys or studies relating to the causes, effects (including health and welfare effects), extent, prevention, and control of air pollution through emission reduction projects which work towards meeting the NAAQS, which may include the development of energy efficiency and/or renewable energy projects overseen by governmental entities in U.S./Mexico Border communities. These activities could include education of or by governmental entities on energy efficiency, the facilitation by states and local governments of renewable energy projects, calculation of emissions reductions

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implementing programs for the prevention and control of air pollution or implementation of national primary and secondary ambient air quality standards. For the purpose of this section, "implementing" means any activity related to the planning, developing, establishing, carrying-out, improving, or maintaining of such programs.....

....(C) With respect to any air quality control region or portion thereof for which there is an applicable implementation plan under section 110, grants under subparagraph (A) may be made only to air pollution control agencies which have substantial responsibilities for carrying out such applicable implementation plan.

<sup>2</sup> Demonstrations generally must involve **new or experimental** technologies, methods, or approaches, where the results of the project will be disseminated so that others can benefit from the knowledge gained in the demonstration project. A project that is accomplished through the performance of routine, traditional, or established practices, or a project that is simply intended to carry out a task rather than transfer information or advance the state of knowledge, however worthwhile the project might be, is not a demonstration.

needed to meet the NAAQS in areas utilizing wind turbines, the development of cost-effective solar applications for government buildings, and to encourage the use by governmental entities and production of biodiesel fuels to reduce air pollution emissions from fuels currently used in the border region.

3. Non-traditional Air Pollution Reduction Approaches to Air Quality Management Projects:

Proposed projects should support the coordination of research, investigations, experiments, demonstrations (see footnote 2), surveys and studies relating to the causes, effects (including health and welfare effects), extent, prevention, and control of air pollution through non-traditional air quality NAAQS compliance management approaches undertaken by governmental entities, such as either voluntary programs (e.g., new public/private partnerships) or regulatory programs (e.g., limiting traffic in downtown areas). These activities could include the investigation of various voluntary means for improving visibility in Class I areas, anti-idling technology and other pollution prevention devices on locomotives operating within the border and the U.S. to evaluate diesel emissions reductions, a Truck Stop Electrification (TSE) station in Mexico for trucks entering the U.S., and the assessment of a registry of and technical assistance program for trucking/transport organizations (similar to the SMARTWAY system) in Mexico.

Projects similar to those listed will only be considered for funding as demonstration projects if the proposal produces new and useful knowledge to improve air quality NAAQS compliance management approaches and practices in the border area.

4. Education and Promotion of Ambient Air Pollution Reduction Strategies Overseen by Air Pollution Control Agencies:

Proposed projects should support the coordination of public awareness through education of air pollution reduction practices overseen by air pollution control agencies along the U.S./Mexico Border.

Applicants should refer to Appendix A of the US EPA, Office of Air and Radiation 2005-2007 National Program and Grant Guidance for additional information on the U.S./Mexico Border Air Program funding priorities at:  
<http://www.epa.gov/ocfo/npmguidance/index.htm>.

**C. Statutory Authority:** The statutory authorities for the awards to be made under this announcement are the Clean Air Act (as amended) of 1990, Section 103 (a)(1) and (b)(3) which state that:

- (a) “The Administrator shall establish a national research and development program for the prevention and control of air pollution and as part of such program shall – (1) conduct, and promote the coordination and acceleration

of, research, investigations, experiments, demonstrations, surveys, and studies relating to the causes, effects (including health and welfare effects), extent, prevention, and control of air pollution;

(b) “In carrying out the provisions of the preceding subsection the Administrator is authorized to – (3) make grants to air pollution control agencies, to other public or nonprofit private agencies, institutions, and organizations, and to individuals, for the purposes stated in subsection (a)(1) of this section.

**D. Alignment with EPA’s Strategic Plan:** The proposed projects must relate to and fit within the scope of the U.S. EPA’s 2003-2008 Strategic Plan’s goals and objectives. The proposed projects shall be related to ambient-air (outdoor) projects and programmatic activities related to **Goal 1** - Clean Air and Global Climate Change; **Objective 1.1** - Healthier Outdoor Air, **Sub-objective 1.1.1** - More People Breathing Clean Air. The full Strategic Plan can be found on the following website:  
[www.epa.gov/ocfo/plan/2003sp.pdf](http://www.epa.gov/ocfo/plan/2003sp.pdf).

- **Environmental Results:** In keeping with the mission of protecting human health and the environment, U.S. EPA awards assistance agreements in support of these goals. Pursuant to EPA Order 5700.7, “*Environmental Results under EPA Assistance Agreements*,” applicants must adequately address anticipated environmental outcomes and outputs in proposed workplan objectives and performance measures. Outcomes and outputs differ both in their nature and in how they are measured.

Expected environmental **outcomes** mean the result, effect or consequence that will occur from carrying out an environmental program or activity that is related to an environmental or programmatic goal or objective. Outcomes may be environmental, behavioral, health-related or programmatic in nature, must be quantitative, and may not necessarily be achievable within an assistance agreement funding period. Examples of expected outcomes for the awards under this announcement may include: significant number of people using alternative fuels; tons of emissions reduced; reduction in ozone NAAQS exceedances; increased number of Border residents breathing cleaner air.

Expected environmental **outputs** (or deliverables) refer to an environmental activity, effort, and/or associated work products related to an environmental goal or objectives, that will be produced or provided over a period of time or by a specified date. Outputs may be quantitative or qualitative but must be measurable during an assistance agreement funding period. Examples of expected environmental outputs from the awards under this announcement may include: conducting a U.S.-Mexico Border Energy Forum; raw and summarized air monitoring data; reported number of fleet vehicles operated using waste vegetable oil.

## **Section II - Award Information.**

- A. Amount of Funding Available:** The total estimated funding available under this competitive opportunity is approximately \$1,500,000 in STAG funds. The number of assistance agreements EPA expects to fund as a result of this announcement will be between ten to thirty awards in the form of *cooperative agreements* ranging from about \$25,000 to \$600,000 each.

For informational purposes only, EPA Region 6 issued eight awards ranging from \$53,000 to \$354,000 per award in the fiscal year (FY) 2005 competition.

Previous recipients of these funds in the FY 2005 competition may apply for new projects or for more funding to expand existing projects. Proposals for renewal or supplementation of existing projects are eligible to compete with proposals for new awards. Receipt of funds from the FY 2005 competition is no guarantee of future funding. Each applicant may submit only one proposal for this competition.

- B. Funding Types:** These awards will be funded through a *cooperative agreement* and will include substantial involvement by EPA Region 6. Substantial involvement will include EPA Region 6 performing activities such as the following:

1. Approve specific phases of the project before the recipient proceeds to the next phase;
2. Approve key personnel;
3. Provide technical assistance in some of the project activities;
4. Address deficiencies in performance;
5. Review project results after completion of the work; and
6. Ensure recipient compliance with statutes, regulations, policies and all requirements in the agreement, and review progress reports.

- C. Project Period:** EPA anticipates that the estimated project period for awards resulting from this announcement will begin during FY 2007, with a period of performance not to exceed 18 months.

- D. Funding of Services and Other Partnerships:** Funding may be used to acquire services or fund partnerships, provided the recipient follows procurement and sub-award or sub-grant procedures contained in 40 CFR Part 31, as applicable. Successful applicants must compete contracts for services and products and conduct cost and price analyses to the

extent required by these regulations. The regulations also contain limitations on consultant compensation. Applicants are not required to identify contractors or consultants in their proposal. Moreover, the fact that a successful applicant has named a specific contractor or consultant in the application EPA approves does not relieve it of its obligations to comply with competitive procurement requirements as well as any regulations covered by state or local procurement requirements.

Sub-grants or sub-awards may be used to fund partnerships with universities and non-profit organizations. Successful applicants cannot use sub-grants or sub-awards to avoid requirements in EPA grant regulations for competitive procurement by using these instruments to acquire commercial services or products to carry out its cooperative agreement. The nature of the transaction between the recipient and the sub-grantee must be consistent with the standards for distinguishing between vendor transactions and sub-recipient assistance under Subpart B Section .210 of OMB Circular A-133, and the definitions of “sub-award” at 40 CFR 30.2(ff) or “sub-grant” at 40 CFR 31.3, as applicable. EPA will not be a party to these transactions.

- E. Partial Funding:** EPA reserves the right to partially fund submissions by funding discrete activities, portions, or phases of the proposed project. If EPA decides to partially fund the proposed project, it will do so in a manner that does not prejudice any applicants or affect the basis upon which the proposed project, or portion thereof, was evaluated and selected, and that maintains the integrity of the competition and the selection/evaluation process.

EPA reserves the right to make additional awards under this announcement (after the original award selections are made) if additional funding becomes available. Any additional selections for awards will be made no later than 6 months after the original selection decisions. The additional selections must be made in accordance with the terms of this announcement and EPA policy.

EPA also reserves the right to reject all proposals and make no awards in response to this announcement, or make fewer awards than anticipated.

### **Section III - Eligibility Information.**

- A. CFDA:** The applicable Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number for this announcement is 66.034-- Surveys, Studies, Investigations, Demonstrations and Special Purpose Activities Relating to the Clean Air Act. There is no required cost share/match associated with awards under this CFDA.

Assistance under this announcement is available to states, federally recognized Tribes, and CAA § 105-eligible air pollution control agencies (see footnote 1) which submit proposals for projects with significant technical merit and relevance to EPA’s Office of



Air and Radiation's mission.

Previous recipients of these funds in the FY 2005 competition may compete for new projects or for more money to expand existing projects. Proposals for renewal or supplementation of existing projects are eligible to compete with proposals for new awards. Receipt of funds from the FY 2005 competition is no guarantee of future funding. Each applicant may submit only one proposal for this competition.

**B. Threshold Eligibility Criteria:** Proposals must meet all of the threshold eligibility factors below or they will not be considered for funding. Applicants deemed ineligible for funding consideration as a result of the threshold eligibility review will be notified within 15 calendar days of the ineligibility determination.

1. Applicants must be eligible under this competition as described in Section A above.
2. Projects eligible for funding under this Section 103 authority must engage in conducting research, investigations, experiments, demonstrations (see footnote 2), surveys, studies and/or trainings relating to the causes, effects (including health and welfare effects), extent, prevention, and control of air pollution in support of the U.S./Mexico Border initiative.
3. Proposals must support **Goal 1** of EPA's Strategic Plan- Clean Air and Global Climate Change; **Objective 1.1** - Healthier Outdoor Air, **Sub-objective 1.1.1** - More People Breathing Clean Air.
4. Proposals must be for projects to be performed within 100 kilometers of the U.S./Mexico Border.
5. Proposals must address one or more of the four project descriptions listed in Section I(B), under the *Scope of Work*, of this announcement. While proposals can address more than one project description, only one proposal will be accepted per applicant.
6. Proposals must not be used for the purposes of routine program implementation, implementation of routine environmental protection or restoration measures, meeting any legal mandate (such as federal, state or local regulations or settlement agreements), land acquisition, purchase of vehicles, or completion of work that should have been completed under a prior grant or cooperative agreement.
7. Proposals must substantially comply with the submission instructions and

requirements set forth in this announcement or else they will be rejected. In addition, pages in excess of the five page single spaced limit for the workplan narrative described in Section IV(B)(2) will not be reviewed. Further, proposals must be postmarked (if mailed or sent by commercial delivery service) or received through Grants.gov on or before the closing date and time published in Section IV(E), *Submission Date and Time*, of this announcement. Proposals postmarked or received after the published closing date will be returned to the sender without further consideration.

## **Section IV - Proposal and Submission Information.**

- A. **Proposal Requirements:** Regardless of mode of submission, applicants are required to submit proposal packages containing a *cover page*, *narrative workplan* (limited to no more than five pages, single spaced), and a *budget narrative*. The page limit only applies to the narrative workplan. (Note: applicants who elect to use Grants.gov to submit their proposal should refer to the instructions in Section IV(E)(2), *Grants.gov Proposal Submission*, and Appendix A for additional instructions).
- B. **Proposal Elements:** Each proposal package should include the following components and information:
1. **Cover Page:** Include the following information:
    - a. **Project Title.**
    - b. **Project Manager:** Identify who will serve as the principal party responsible for accomplishing the activities outlined in the narrative workplan, including phone number and email address.
    - c. **Total Project Cost:** Specify total cost of the project. There is no required cost-share/match, but applicants should identify any funding that the recipient intends to contribute to the financial support of the project activities if warranted.
    - d. **Project Period:** Provide anticipated beginning and ending dates. EPA expects to make awards during FY 2007, with a period of performance not to exceed 18 months.
    - e. **Type of Project:** Indicate which of the four project descriptions listed in Section I(B), under the *Scope of Work*, will be addressed as a result of the project.
  2. **Narrative Workplan:** The narrative workplan must be no more than five single spaced pages. In addition, the page size must be 8½ by 11" with a font size of 12 points or larger. Pages in excess of the five page limit will not be reviewed. The

workplan must also clearly describe how the proposed project meets the guidelines established in Section I(B), *Scope of Work*, and the threshold requirements described in Section III, and specifically address the evaluation criteria disclosed in Section V(B), *Evaluation Criteria*.

- a. ***Project Description:*** Illustrate the need for the project. Please include the following elements:
- 1) **Problem Statement:** Provide a well-supported statement or needs assessment of the problem to be addressed which demonstrates the reason your state, tribe, or air pollution control agency should receive funding support.
  - 2) **Objectives:** Identify the project objectives. Objectives should be specific, measurable, and clearly describe how they are related to and lead to the project goals and expected environmental results. Be sure to link them to the “public” benefits to be obtained.
  - 3) **Project Methods:** Outline, in detail, the necessary tasks and activities that will be conducted to accomplish the objectives. Describe why you have chosen these activities to obtain the desired environmental results. The tasks and activities should be realistic and achievable within the budget and project period of the assistance agreement.
  - 4) **Specific Environmental Outputs:** Identify the specific project outputs--deliverables of an environmental activity, effort, and/or associated work products related to an environmental goal or objectives, which will be developed over a period of time or by a specified date. Outputs may be quantitative or qualitative but must be measurable during an assistance agreement funding period. Examples of expected outputs are included in Section I of the announcement.
  - 5) **Desired Environmental Outcomes:** Articulate the desired environmental outcomes. Also, identify the result, effect, or consequence that will occur from carrying out an environmental program or activity that is related to an environmental or programmatic goal or objective. Outcomes may be environmental, behavioral, health-related or programmatic in nature, must be quantitative, and may not necessarily be achievable within an assistance agreement funding period. Examples of expected outcomes are identified in Section I of the announcement.
  - 6) **Target Dates & Milestones:** Include an estimated time-line or schedule of expected target dates and milestones to achieve specific tasks and accomplishments during the budget and project

period.

- 7) **Performance Measures:** Provide a detailed explanation of how the project shall be evaluated (through quantitative means, if possible). Applicants should develop criteria to evaluate progress and results. Evaluation should occur during as well as after the project activities are conducted to make sure appropriate adjustments can be made along the way, if necessary. For example, if you are conducting air monitoring activities, provide the number of samples that you plan to collect each quarter. In addition, applicants must provide their approach for tracking and measuring their progress in achieving the expected project outputs and outcomes, including those identified in Section I.
- 8) **Program Manager/Contact(s):** Identify all individuals or parties who will be involved in the project activities, and a description of their respective roles/responsibilities.
- 9) **Environmental Results Past Performances:** Submit a list of federally funded assistance agreements that your organization performed within the last three years (no more than five agreements, and preferably EPA agreements), and describe how you documented and/or reported on whether you were making progress towards achieving the expected results (e.g., outputs and outcomes) under those agreements. If you were not making progress, please indicate whether, and how, you documented why not. In evaluating applicants under this factor in Section V, EPA will consider the information provided by the applicant and may also consider relevant information from other sources, including information from EPA files and from current and prior federal agency grantors (e.g. to verify and/or supplement the information provided by the applicant). If you do not have any relevant or available environmental results past performance information, please indicate this in the proposal and you will receive a neutral score for these factors under Section V.
- 10) **Programmatic Capability:** Submit a list of federally funded assistance agreements similar in size, scope and relevance to the proposed project that your organization performed within the last three years (no more than five, and preferably EPA agreements) and describe (i) whether, and how, you were able to successfully complete and manage those agreements and (ii) your history of meeting the reporting requirements under those agreements including submitting acceptable final technical reports. In evaluating applicants under these factors in Section V, EPA will consider the information provided by the applicant and may also

consider relevant information from other sources, including information from EPA files and from current and prior federal agency grantors (e.g., to verify and/or supplement the information provided by the applicant). If you do not have any relevant or available past performance or reporting information, please indicate this in the proposal and you will receive a neutral score for these factors under Section V.

In addition, provide information on your organizational experience and plan for timely and successfully achieving the objectives of the proposed project, and your staff expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the proposed project.

3. **Budget Narrative:** Provide a detailed itemized budget proposal, including a narrative statement justifying the expenses for each of the following categories being performed within the project/budget period.
- a. **Personnel:** Indicate salaries and wages, by job title of all individuals who will be supplemented with these funds. For example:
- \* Air Quality Specialist @ \$600/wk x 52 weeks = \$31,200  
(or)  
\* Air Quality Specialist @ \$15/hr x 40 hrs/wk x 52/wks = \$31,200  
**Total = \$31,200**
- b. **Fringe Benefits:** Indicate all mandated and voluntary benefits to be supplemented with these funds. For example:
- \* Health Insurance - 1 FTE @ \$35/month x 12/months = \$420  
\* Dental - 1 FTE @ \$40/mo x 12/months = \$480  
**Total = \$900**
- c. **Travel:** Indicate number of individuals traveling, destination, number of trips, and reason for travel. For example:
- \* Air Quality Training LMN  
Air Fare \$750 x 1 FTE = \$750  
Per Diem @ \$43 day x 3 days x 1 FTE = \$129  
Hotel @ \$100 day x 2 days x 1 FTE = \$200  
\* Air Conference XYZ  
Local Travel Mileage – 1,000 miles x \$0.445 = \$445  
**Total = \$1,524**

- d. Equipment: Identify items to be purchased such as air quality related instruments used in support of workplan objectives. Provide an estimated cost for each item. Make sure you can support your cost estimate. EPA policy defines equipment as items costing \$5,000 or greater. Indicate if your state, tribe, or air pollution control agency's definition differs. For example:

\* NOx Monitor - \$6,000

\* Ozone Monitor - \$8,000

**Total = \$14,000**

- e. Supplies: Indicate any items to be purchased that will be used in support of air project workplan objectives. For example:

\* General office supplies (pens, notebooks, paper-clips, CD ROMs, etc.)

**Total = \$500**

- f. Contractual: Indicate any proposed contractual items that are reasonable and necessary to carry out the workplan objectives. Examples of contractual items include sample analysis, and rental or lease of property being utilized in support of workplan objectives. For example:

\* NOx sample analysis - ABC Lab

[52 samples @ \$100 = \$5,200]

\* Shipping costs (site to lab)

[\$15.00 per sample = 15 x 52 = \$780]

**Total = \$5,980**

- g. Other: Indicate general (miscellaneous) expenses necessary to carry out the objectives stated in the workplan. For example:

\* Office needs (postage, phone, fax, etc.) = \$560

\* Office space (utilized for air-related project staff)

[\$120/mo x 12/mo = \$1,440]

**Total = \$2,000**

- h. Total Direct Charges: Summary of all costs associated with each object-class category.

**\* Total = \$56,104**

- i. Total Indirect Costs: State, tribe, or air pollution control agency must provide documentation of a federally approved indirect cost rate (percentage) reflective of proposed project/budget period. Applicant should indicate if it is currently in negotiations with appropriate federal agency to obtain a new rate.

**\* IDC Rate is 10% of total direct charges = \$5,610**

- j. Total Cost: Indicate overall figure of all direct and indirect costs. For example:

**\* Total Budget = \$61,714**

4. **Quality Assurance**: Any project involving environmentally related measurements or data generation requires that the applicant organization have an EPA-approved Quality Management Plan, as well as a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) for the proposed project. If the grantee currently has an EPA approved QMP and/or QAPP, please reference this as well as provide the QTRAK numbers, or assure in the proposal that the plan will be developed before any data is generated and/or analyzed. For further questions on QAPP development, refer to EPA Requirements for Quality Assurance Project Plans (QA/R-5) which can be found at: <http://www.epa.gov/quality/qs-docs/r5-final.pdf>.

- C. **Confidential Business Information**. In accordance with 40 CFR 2.203, applicants may claim all or a portion of their application/proposal as confidential business information. EPA will evaluate confidentiality claims in accordance with 40 CFR Part 2. Applicants must clearly mark applications/proposals or portions of applications/proposals they claim as confidential. If no claim of confidentiality is made, EPA is not required to make the inquiry to the applicant otherwise required by 40 CFR 2.204 (c)(2) prior to disclosure. Note that under Public Law No. 105-277, data produced under an award is subject to the Freedom of Information Act.

- D. **Intergovernmental Review**: This program may be eligible for coverage under E.O. 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs." An applicant should consult the office or official designated as the single point of contact in his or her state for more information on the process the state requires to be followed in applying for assistance, if the state has selected the program for review.  
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/spoc.html>. Applicants (except for Federally Recognized Indian Tribes and Tribal Consortia) must comply with the Intergovernmental Review Process and/or consultation provisions of Executive Order 12372. EPA's implementing regulations for this Executive Order can be found at 40 CFR 29.1-29.13.

- E. **Submission Date and Time**. The grant period for all applicants applying under this solicitation is anticipated to begin during FY 2007, with a period of performance not to exceed 18 months. The closing date for applicants to submit proposals under this announcement is **November 15, 2006**. Proposals may be submitted in hard copy or electronically through Grants.gov (see below as well as Appendix A).

1. **Hard Copy Submissions**: Proposals submitted via U.S. mail or by commercial

delivery services must be post-marked by the closing date. Late proposals will not be considered. Hard copy submissions, prepared as described in Section IV(A) and (B), must be addressed to:

Aunjanee' Gautreaux (6PD-Q)  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
1445 Ross Avenue  
Dallas, Texas 75202-2733

2. **Grants.gov Proposal Submission:** If you wish to apply electronically via Grants.gov, the electronic submission of your proposal package must be made by an official representative of your institution who is registered with Grants.gov and authorized to sign applications for Federal assistance by the closing date and time (5 pm Central). For more information, go to <http://www.grants.gov> and click on "Get Registered" on the left side of the page. *Note that the registration process may take a week or longer to complete.* If your organization is not currently registered with Grants.gov, please encourage your office to designate an AOR and ask that individual to begin the registration process as soon as possible.

**If you have never used Grants.Gov before, here are some tips.**

Most organizations have found Grants.Gov to be a user friendly system. The most frequent concern has occurred when an organization has delayed obtaining the unique electronic signature to the last minute.

Register for your electronic signature early! An electronic signature requires three levels of authorization before you can submit on line. You need to decide who will be the AOR, the caretaker of the electronic signature for your organization. At a university the Chief Grant Official generally signs all of the electronic grants for the entire institution. If all goes well, this process takes about a week, but some organizations have encountered internal and external delays; therefore the registration process can take longer.

**Remember, you cannot submit your proposal online until your organization has e-authentication credentials. Here are the basic steps:**



1. Obtain a Certified DUNS Number. You must first have a certified, unique Dun and Bradstreet Universal Data Numbering System (DUNS) number. Some organizations may have more than one DUNS number registered. Only one can be certified. This can lead to unanticipated delays.
2. Central Contractor Registry and Credential Provider Registration. Once you have your unique, approved DUNS number, you need to register with the Central Contractor Registry.
3. Grants.Gov Electronic Signature Authorization. Once steps (1) and (2) are complete, you will then need to contact Grants.Gov. The Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) will be assigned a password that will enable him or her to sign the Grants.Gov applications electronically. The AOR must be an individual who is able to make legally binding commitments for the applicant organization. Organizations may designate more than one AOR.

Please be sure to view the additional instructions that are available for download on Grants.gov for this announcement and which are included as Appendix A to this announcement. If you have any technical difficulties while applying electronically, please contact Grants.gov for assistance by phone at 1-800-518-4726 or email at <http://www.grants.gov/help/help.jsp> or contact Aunjaneé' Gautreaux via fax at 214-665-6762 or email at [gautreaux.aunjane@epa.gov](mailto:gautreaux.aunjane@epa.gov).

- F. Application Package for Approved Proposals:** Applicants tentatively selected for funding will be provided further instructions on the submission of the complete federal grant application package at a later date.
- G. DUNS:** All applicants are required to provide a Dun and Bradstreet (D&B) Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number when applying for a federal grant or cooperative agreement. Applicants can receive a DUNS number, at no cost, by calling the dedicated toll-free DUNS Number request line at 1-866-705-5711, or visiting the D&B website at: <http://www.dnb.com>.
- H. Pre-proposal/Application Assistance and Communications:** In accordance with EPA's Assistance Agreement Competition Policy (EPA Order 5700.5A1), EPA staff will not meet with individual applicants to discuss draft proposals, provide informal comments on draft proposals, or provide advice to applicants on how to respond to ranking criteria. Applicants are responsible for the contents of their applications/

proposals. However, EPA will respond to questions in writing from individual applicants regarding threshold eligibility criteria, administrative issues related to the submission of the proposal, and requests for clarification about the announcement.

## **Section V - Proposal Review Information.**

- A. **Review and Selection Process:** There will be a three-tiered review process for proposals. The first tier will be a basic review of the proposals by EPA staff to assure they are eligible for funding consideration by making a determination of whether the applicant has satisfied all the threshold criteria listed in Section III(C) of the announcement.

Those proposals that pass the first tier will undergo a second tier review. This tier will involve the evaluation of the proposals against the criteria identified below. A panel of EPA Region 6 U.S./Mexico Border and grant staff will be assembled to conduct the second tier review of each eligible proposal. As a competitive financial assistance program, no proposal is guaranteed funding. Each proposal will be given a numerical score, with a total of 100 possible points. The second tier review will result in the rankings of proposals based on their scores and the rankings will be provided by the panel to the Approval Official described below.

In the third tier review, the Director of the Multimedia Planning and Permitting Division of EPA Region 6, the Approval Official, will review the review panel rankings and then make the final selection of projects to be considered for funding approval. In making the final funding selection recommendations, the Approval Official will consider the review panel rankings and may consider the following other factors: air quality status, geographic and technological diversity, project quality, feasibility, likelihood of significant environmental outcomes, and programmatic priorities.

- B. **Evaluation Criteria:** Each eligible proposal will be evaluated according to the criteria set forth below. Applicants should directly and explicitly address these criteria as part of their proposal submittal. Each proposal will be rated under a points system, with a total of 100 points possible.

1. **Project Overview (Concept): (10 pts.)**

- C Proposals will be evaluated based on the applicant's ability to demonstrate the high potential for success by clearly stating overall project goals and objectives that are valuable in analyzing or reducing air pollution in the U.S.-Mexico Border area and by citing other similar projects that have successfully accomplished the goals of the proposed project.

2. Proposal Methodology: **(20 pts.)**
- C Proposals will be evaluated based on the applicant's ability to clearly demonstrate a logical and meritorious method of conducting the work of the proposed project, the partners that will be used, and specific responsibilities of each entity participating in the proposed project.
3. Proposal Technical Sufficiency: **(25 pts.)**
- C Proposals will be evaluated based on the applicant's ability to clearly demonstrate the technical merit of the workplan with accomplishment dates that will translate into successful achievement of the goals, and documentation of such achievement for the proposed project.
4. Proposal Cost-Effectiveness: **(15 pts.)**
- C Proposals will be evaluated based on the applicant's ability to clearly demonstrate a cost-effective budget to achieve project goals.
5. Programmatic Capability: **(10 pts.)**
- C Under this criterion, applicants will be evaluated based on their ability to successfully complete and manage the proposed project taking into account the following factors: (i) its past performance in successfully completing and managing federally funded assistance agreements similar in size, scope, and relevance to the proposed project performed within the last 3 years, (ii) its history of meeting reporting requirements under federally funded assistance agreements similar in size, scope, and relevance to the proposed project performed within the last 3 years and submitting acceptable final technical reports under those agreements, (iii) its organizational experience and plan for timely and successfully achieving the objectives of the proposed project, and (iv) its staff expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the proposed project. Note: In evaluating applicants under this criterion, the Agency will consider the information provided by the applicant and may also consider relevant information from other sources including agency files and prior/current grantors (e.g., to verify and/or supplement the information supplied by the applicant). Applicants with no relevant or available past performance or reporting history (items i and ii above), will receive a neutral score for those elements of this criterion.

6. EPA Strategic Plan Linkage and Anticipated Outcomes/Outputs: **(10 pts.)**
- C Proposals will be evaluated based on the effectiveness of the applicant's plan for tracking and measuring progress toward achieving the expected project outputs and outcomes including those identified in Section I of this announcement.
7. Environmental Results on Past Performance Criterion: **(10 pts.)**
- C Under this criterion, applicants will be evaluated based on the extent and quality to which they adequately documented and/or reported on their progress towards achieving the expected results (e.g., outcomes and outputs) under federal agency assistance agreements performed within the last three years, and if such progress was not being made whether the applicant adequately documented and/or reported why not. Note: In evaluating applicants under this factor, EPA will consider the information provided by the applicant and may also consider relevant information from other sources including agency files and prior/current grantors (e.g., to verify and/or supplement the information supplied by the applicant). Applicants with no relevant or available past performance reporting history will receive a neutral score for this factor.

## **Section VI - Award Administration Information.**

- A. **Award Notices:** EPA Region 6 will notify both successful and unsuccessful applicant(s) in writing and by electronic mail. Applicants tentatively selected for award will be expected to submit final applications, including all required assistance documents to the Grants Administration Office within **30 days** of being notified.

Note - USEPA reserves the right to negotiate appropriate changes in workplans after the selection and before the final award consistent with the Agency's Competition Policy (EPA Order 5700.5A1). The notification, which advises that the applicant's proposal has been tentatively selected and is being recommended for award, is not an authorization to begin performance. The award notice signed by the Multimedia Planning and Permitting Division Director is the authorizing document and will be provided through postal mail. At a minimum, this process can take up to 60 days from the date of selection.

**B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements.**

1. A listing and description of general EPA Regulations applicable to the award of

assistance agreements may be viewed at:  
[http://www.epa.gov/ogd/AppKit/applicable\\_epa\\_regulations\\_and\\_description.htm](http://www.epa.gov/ogd/AppKit/applicable_epa_regulations_and_description.htm)

2. Programmatic Terms and conditions will be negotiated with the selected recipient.

- C. Reporting Requirement.** Quarterly progress reports and a detailed final report will be required. Quarterly reports summarizing technical progress, planned activities for next quarter and summary of expenditures are required. Applicants are further required to make a commitment to share all data collected with EPA for assessment on a regional level. The final report shall be completed within 90 calendar days of the completion of the period of performance. The final report should encompass a complete overview/summary of all of the activities conducted within the grant project period; including any and all data results as well as a justification for impediments should be addressed. The schedule for submission of quarterly reports will be established by EPA, after applicant has been approved for an award.

While the Agency will negotiate precise terms and conditions relating to substantial involvement as part of the award process, EPA will not select employees or contractors employed by the recipient(s) and the final decision on the content of reports rests with the recipient(s).

- D. Disputes.** Assistance agreement competition-related disputes will be resolved in accordance with the dispute resolution procedures published in 70 FR (Federal Register) 3629, 3630 (January 26, 2005) which can be found at:  
<http://a257.g.akamaitech.net/7/257/2422/01jan20051800/edocket.access.gpo.gov/2005/05-1371.htm>. Copies of these procedures may also be requested by contacting the Agency Contact listed in Section VII.
- E. Quality Assurance.** Any project involving environmentally related measurements or data generation that is selected for funding approval will be required to submit an EPA-approved Quality Management Plan, as well as a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) for the proposed project. For further questions on QAPP development, refer to EPA Requirements for Quality Assurance Project Plans (QA/R-5) which can be found at:  
<http://www.epa.gov/quality/qs-docs/r5-final.pdf>.

## **Section VII - Agency Contact.**

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Aunjaneé' Gautreaux

(214) 665-6762 (fax)

[gautreaux.aunjane@epa.gov](mailto:gautreaux.aunjane@epa.gov)

All questions or comments should be communicated in writing via electronic mail (email) or facsimile to the contact person listed above. Questions and answers will be posted weekly on the Region 6 Air webpage at: <http://www.epa.gov/region6/air>.

## **Section VIII - Other Information.**

The EPA Award Official is the only official who can bind the Agency to the expenditure of funds or selected projects resulting from this announcement.

## **- Appendix A -**

### **Grants.gov Application Instructions**

#### **General Application Instructions**

If you wish to apply electronically via Grants.gov, the electronic submission of your proposal package must be made by an official representative of your institution who is registered with Grants.gov and authorized to sign applications for federal assistance. For more information, go to <http://www.grants.gov> and click on “Get Registered” on the left side of the page. *Note that the registration process may take a week or longer to complete.* If your organization is not currently registered with Grants.gov, please encourage your office to designate an AOR and ask that individual to begin the registration process as soon as possible.

To begin the application process for this grant program, go to <http://www.grants.gov> and click on the “Apply for Grants” tab on the left side of the page. Then click on “Apply Step 1: Download a Grant Application Package and Instructions” to download the PureEdge viewer and obtain the application package and instructions for applying under this announcement using grants.gov ([https://apply.grants.gov/forms\\_apps\\_idx.html](https://apply.grants.gov/forms_apps_idx.html)). You may retrieve the application package by entering the Funding Opportunity Number, **EPA-R6-GRANTS-111506-01**, or the CFDA number (66.034) in the space provided. Then complete and submit the application package as indicated. You may also be able to access the application package by clicking on the button “How To Apply” at the top right of the synopsis page for this announcement on <http://www.grants.gov> (to find the synopsis page go to <http://www.grants.gov> and click on the “Find Grant Opportunities” button on the left side of the page then go to Search Opportunities/Browse by Agency and select EPA)..

**Proposal Submission Deadline:** Your organization’s AOR must submit your proposal package electronically to EPA through grants.gov (<http://www.grants.gov>) no later than 5:00 pm (Central time) on **November 15, 2006**.

#### **Proposal Materials:**

If using Grants.gov to submit your proposal, please submit all of the documents described below. To view the full announcement, go to <http://www.epa.gov/region6/air> or <http://www.grants.gov>.

#### **The following documents are required under this announcement:**

- I. SF 424-Application For Federal Assistance
- II. SF 424A-Budget Information
- III. Proposal prepared as described in Sections IV(A) and (B) of the announcement.

**The proposal package *must* include all of the following materials:**

- I. SF 424, Application For Federal Assistance –  
Complete the form. There are no attachments. Please be sure to include organization fax number and email address in Block 5 of the Standard Form SF 424. Please note that the organizational Dun and Bradstreet (D&B) Data Universal Number System (DUNS) number must be included on the SF-424. Organizations may obtain a DUNS number at no cost by calling the toll-free DUNS number request line at 1-866-705-5711.
- II. SF 424A, Budget Information –  
Complete the form. There are no attachments. The total amount of federal funding requested for the project period should be shown on line 5(e) and on line 6(k) of SF-424A. If indirect costs are included, the amount of indirect costs should be entered on line 6(j). The indirect cost rate (i.e., a percentage), the base (e.g., personnel costs and fringe benefits), and the amount should also be indicated on line 22.
- III. Proposal –  
Prepare as described in Section IV(A) and (B) of the announcement. The attached document must be in Microsoft Word, WordPerfect, or PDF for Windows, and consolidated into a single file and include the information described in Section IV(B) of the announcement.

**Proposal Preparation and Submission Instructions**

For **documents I and II**, click on the appropriate form and then click “Open Form” below the box. The fields that must be completed will be highlighted in yellow. Optional fields and completed fields will be displayed in white. If you enter an invalid response or incomplete information in a field, you will receive an error message. When you have finished filling out each form, click “Save.” When you return to the electronic Grant Application Package page, click on the form you just completed, and then click on the box that says, “Move Form to Submission List.” This action will move the document over to the box that says, “Mandatory Completed Documents for Submission.”

For **document III**, you will need to attach electronic files. Prepare your proposal as described in Section IV(A) and (B) of the announcement and save the document to your computer as a Microsoft Word, Word Perfect, or PDF file. (USEPA prefers to receive documents in Microsoft Word, but documents prepared in WordPerfect and PDF will also be accepted.) When you are ready to attach your proposal to the application package, click on “Project Narrative Attachment Form,” and open the form. Click “Add Mandatory Project Narrative File,” and then attach your proposal (previously saved to your computer) using the browse window that appears. You may then click “View Mandatory Project Narrative File” to view it. Enter a brief descriptive title of your project in the space beside “Mandatory Project Narrative File Filename;” the filename



should be no more than 40 characters long. If there are other attachments that you would like to submit to accompany your Proposal, you may click “Add Optional Project Narrative File” and proceed as before. When you have finished attaching the necessary documents, click “Close Form.” When you return to the “Grant Application Package” page, select the “Project Narrative Attachment Form” and click “Move Form to Submission List.” The form should now appear in the box that says, “Mandatory Completed Documents for Submission.”

Once you have finished filling out all of the forms/attachments and they appear in one of the “Completed Documents for Submission” boxes, click the “Save” button that appears at the top of the Web page. It is suggested that you save the document a second time, using a different name, since this will make it easier to submit an amended package later if necessary. Please use the following format when saving your file: “Applicant Name – FY06 – Assoc Prog Supp – 1<sup>st</sup> Submission” or “Applicant Name – FY 07 Assoc Prog Supp – Back-up Submission.” If it becomes necessary to submit an amended package at a later date, then the name of the 2<sup>nd</sup> submission should be changed to “Applicant Name – FY07 Assoc Prog Supp – 2<sup>nd</sup> Submission.”

Once your proposal package has been completed and saved, send it to your AOR for submission to U.S. EPA through Grants.gov. Please advise your AOR to close all other software programs before attempting to submit the application package through Grants.gov.

In the “Application Filing Name” box, your AOR should enter your organization’s name (abbreviate where possible), the fiscal year (e.g., FY07), and the grant category (e.g., Assoc Prog Supp). The filing name should not exceed 40 characters. From the “Grant Application Package” page, your AOR may submit the application package by clicking the “Submit” button that appears at the top of the page. The AOR will then be asked to verify the agency and funding opportunity number for which the application package is being submitted. If problems are encountered during the submission process, the AOR should reboot his/her computer before trying to submit the application package again. [It may be necessary to turn off the computer (not just restart it) before attempting to submit the package again.] If the AOR continues to experience submission problems, he/she may contact Grants.gov for assistance by phone at 1-800-518-4726 or email at <http://www.grants.gov/help/help.jsp>. He/she may also contact Aunjaneé Gautreaux by email at [gautreaux.aunjane@epa.gov](mailto:gautreaux.aunjane@epa.gov).

Proposal packages submitted thru grants.gov will be time/date stamped electronically.